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ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS  
**Horseshoe  
Lake**

STATE PARK (MADISON COUNTY)



CONSERVATION

## THE PARK

Horseshoe Lake State Park is located near Highway 111 in Madison County which lies in the southwestern part of Illinois. Only minutes away from a large surrounding urban area, the park offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities.

## HISTORY OF THE LAKE

Horseshoe Lake is situated on a low flood plain which follows the Mississippi River down to the Kentucky border. Before the present system of levies was constructed, heavy spring floods would cause the river to overflow its banks. It would sometimes change directions and cut a new channel through these bottomlands. During this process an old river section was cut off from the flowing channel forming a natural oxbow lake. Horseshoe Lake was formed in this manner.

All lakes, whether man-made or natural, begin to fill in as soon as they are formed. Particles of soil called silt are carried in the wind and in water runoff from nearby fields and ditches. Generally, older lakes fill in to become more shallow than new lakes. Horseshoe Lake is a very old lake as illustrated by its three-foot depth.

## INDIAN PAST

Horseshoe Lake has been inhabited by various Indian groups throughout time. The earliest evidence of Indian activity at this site dates 8000 B.C. during the Archaic Period. Artifacts have also been found which fall into the Woodland Period 1000 B.C. — 1000 A.D. During this period Indians lived by hunting and gathering wild foods. Horseshoe Lake served as an excellent food source where Indians fished, hunted waterfowl, and gathered wild vegetables.

Perhaps the most impressive Indian history occurred during the period 800 — 1600 A.D. During this time the “Mighty Metropolis” known as Cahokia Mounds was built. Nearby the 30,000 to 40,000 mound builders farmed extensively but still relied on Horseshoe Lake’s rich food source. Today there still remains an earthen platform mound inside the park boundaries.

**Picnicking** — Three shelters are provided for group picnicking while small areas with convenient parking for the family outing are scattered around the lake. Playground equipment is located near the group picnicking area.

**Fishing and Boating** — The lake contains channel catfish, crappie, and bluegill. Boat fishing is allowed except during waterfowl season. A 25 horsepower limit exists for all watercraft. Three boat ramps are available for public use. A state fishing license is required.



**Concession** — A concession stand is located near the group picnicking area, with a variety of picnic and camping supplies. Also available are sailboat, paddleboat and rowboat rental.

**Camping** — The park accommodates 48 tent or trailers. A sanitary dump station, pit toilets, and water hydrants are conveniently located. All campers must secure a permit from the park ranger.

**Hunting** — To accommodate the waterfowl hunter numerous public blinds are located on the lake. Hunting is allowed only from these public blinds during waterfowl season. Dove hunting is allowed on a portion of the island during the month of September. Check with the Park Office for further hunting regulations.

**Hiking** — Four miles of hiking trails wander through the natural area on the island.

**Winter Sports** — Four miles of cross-country ski trails are maintained on the island.

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .**

Admittance will not be granted to groups of 25 or more

persons to any state area unless permission from the area staff has been secured to use the facilities. It is also required that groups of minors have adequate supervision and at least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.

All state areas are open year round, closing only for Christmas Day and New Year's Day. When weather conditions necessitate the closing of park roads during freezing and thawing periods, access to park facilities is by foot only.

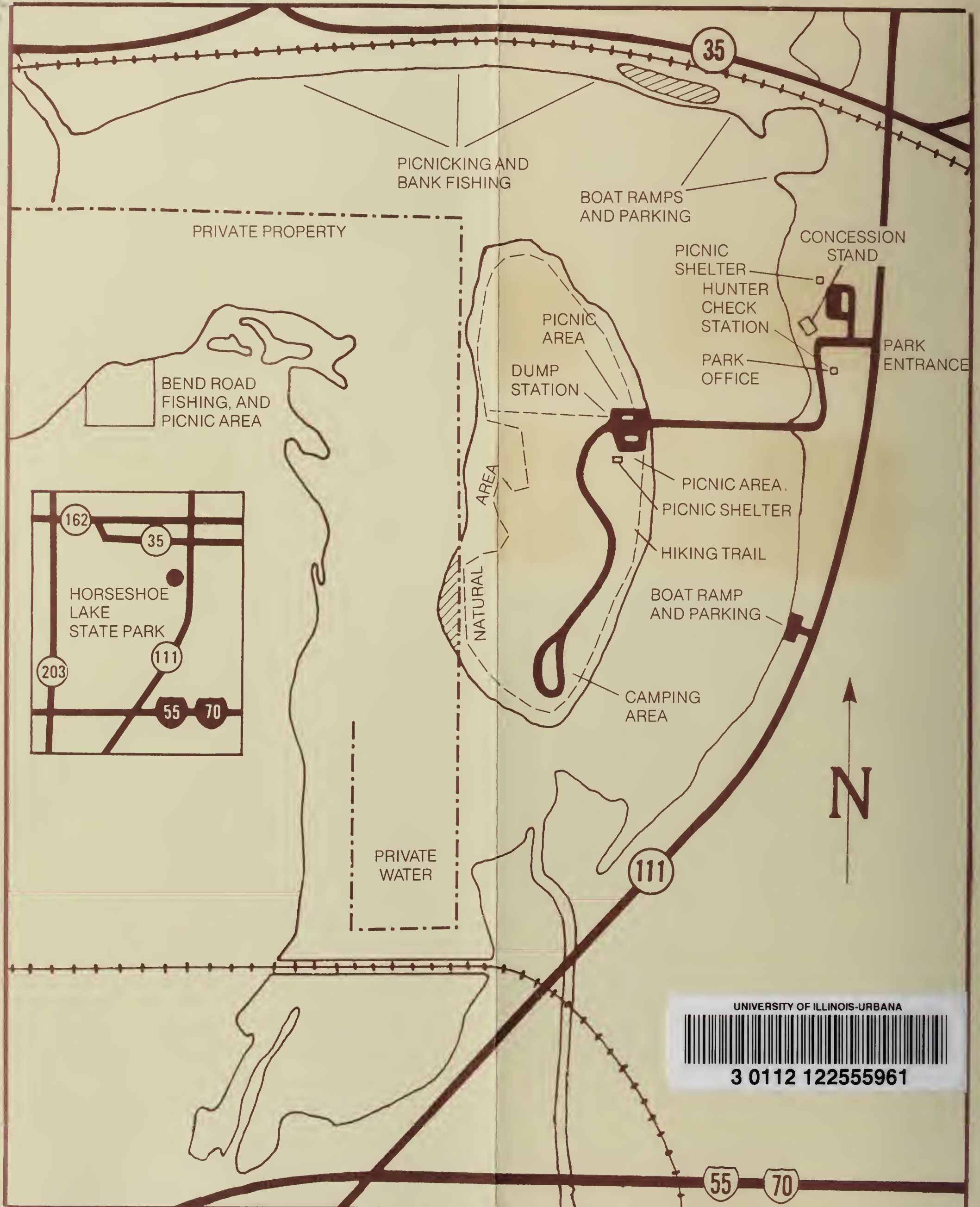
For more details contact Site Superintendent, Horseshoe Lake State Park, P.O. Box 1307, Granite City, IL 62040, phone (618) 931-0270.

For information on other sites, write the Illinois Department of Conservation, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, Illinois 62706.

**PLEASE:** This area is for all to enjoy so please help keep it clean. All vehicles must remain on existing roadways and parking lots. No plants, flowers, shrubs, or trees may be removed or damaged. Fires are permitted only in campstoves located in the picnic areas. All pets must be on a leash which is no longer than 10 feet.







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